

Foster Parents

Changing Lives One Child at a Time

August 2005



"Our children have gone from sacred to scared to sacred, and we must get them back to sacred."

– Cordelia White Elk, Lakota Tribe

Join the 300 people who have subscribed to the Foster Parents LISTSERV®

<http://listserv.wa.gov/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=fosterparents&&A=1>

Check out the Foster Parent Web site:

<http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/ca/fosterparents/>

For all who put children first every day in their lives, we say thank you.

Foster Parent Conference

Pre-Registration will soon begin for the **Foster Parents and Caregivers Conference** to be held September 25 – 27, 2005 (Sunday - Tuesday) at Ocean Shores. On-site registration will be on Sunday, September 25th starting at 10:00 a.m. The program begins at 1:30 p.m. with opening remarks by Cheryl Stephani, Assistant Secretary of Children's Administration.

This year's conference will be both fun and educational. There are more than three dozen workshops and a number of other activities planned. Workshops have been selected to support your work as foster parents. Other workshops speak to teamwork and networking with DSHS and our partners.

Sunday night will feature a salmon barbecue on the lawn outside the Shilo Inn with entertainment by comedian Pat Cashman. Later there will be a bonfire on the beach.

We will honor and celebrate one of our long time partners, KIRO, which has worked its Holiday Magic for many years to help provide donated gifts for children in foster care.

Families for Kids (FFK) have accumulated so many gifts for foster parents to be given away at the conference that they will need a huge truck to haul them to the conference! Foster parents who have their own businesses have been invited to be among the vendors at the event.

Scholarships (registration, lodging and food) will be offered to many foster parents. They will be awarded on a first-come first-served basis. Information will be available shortly via the US Postal Service, List Serve and on the websites of Families for Kids, FPAWS and the Children's Administration Foster Parent website.

Families for Kids have generously offered to coordinate the registration for all foster parents for the conference. Registrations via mail, email and fax will be accepted.

We will keep you informed of the conference details, registration and activities through the LISTSERV® or the web sites below:

www.familiesforkids.org

<http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/ca/fosterparents/>

<http://www.fpaws.org/conferenceinfo.htm>

Connect With Other Foster Parents

About 300 foster parents have linked together in groups across the state to share resources, ideas and emotional support.

They have joined hubs, support groups, buddy systems or mentoring arrangements. The groups are being organized in all 39 counties. In 37 counties, the connections are being made by Families for Kids, part of Lutheran Community Services. In Kitsap and Pierce Counties the Foster Care Resource Network is building connections.

A hub has a family at the center informally coordinating activities and information with a number other families who are like spokes on a wheel. They exchange resources such as clothing, cribs and toys and can also exchange respite with each other.

In buddy systems, a veteran foster parent is teamed up with a new one. Mentoring arrangements are similar to buddy systems as veteran foster parents help guide those coming into the system.

Families for Kids has set up 35 hub arrangements around the state with about 300 foster parents. Their hubs are based on geography. They meet once a month and provide training, which helps meet the 36 hours foster parents are required to take every three years. FFK is seeking more foster parents and will work to make the systems self-sustaining.

“We’re continuing forward with them,” said Daryl Daus, state FFK director.

The Foster Care Resource Network is basing their hubs on topics, such as emotional burnout, foster family services, said Luanne Hawley, who directs the program.

They hope to have 10 groups running by this fall and will continue to support mentoring groups to help support foster parents.

FFK can be reached at 1-800-794-1794 or www.familiesforkids.org. FCRN can be reached at 253-677-8122 or 253-841-0594.

Payment Matters

- The Legislature has approved a 1 percent increase in the monthly reimbursement rate for foster parents. The increase was effective July 1, 2005. If you would like more information on this, please check the foster parent web page.
- Children’s Administration has been identifying instance where payments to individual such as foster parents may be inappropriate. A duplicate payment is one example of the type of inappropriate payment identified. Children’s Administration will soon send letters that identify instances where duplicate payments or other extra payment issues may apply. This situation will not apply to most foster parents, but may apply to some. If you would like more information about this process, please see the letter on the foster parent web page.

Numbers To Know

Here are some numbers to know when you take care of children in foster care:

- Support Line - 5 p.m. to 8 a.m. weekdays and all day weekends and holidays. Need help meeting emotional and behavioral needs involving children in your care that can’t wait until the next day? Call this number: **1-800-301-1868**
- Call Families for Kids for support and retention needs or to join a hub or support group in all counties but Pierce and Kitsap: **1-800-794-1794**; www.familiesforkids.org
- Call the Foster Care Resource Network for support/retention needs or to joining a hub or support group or get a mentor in Kitsap and Pierce counties: **1-253-677-8122**
- Foster Parents Association of Washington State support line and web site: **1-800-391-CARE (2273)**; www.fpaws.org
- FIRST Line for foster parents under investigation for allegations of abuse or neglect: **1-253-219-6782**
- Know somebody who wants information on becoming a foster parent? Call the statewide Why Foster? telephone line and get connected with someone who can help: **1-800-760-5340**